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The earliest pilgrim badges produced for the so-called 'Shroud of Turin'

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The Shroud of Turin, so-called because since 1578 it has been housed in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Turin, Italy, bears shadowy imprints as from the back and front of a human body that has suffered crucifixion (**Fig.1**). Fourteen feet long, its

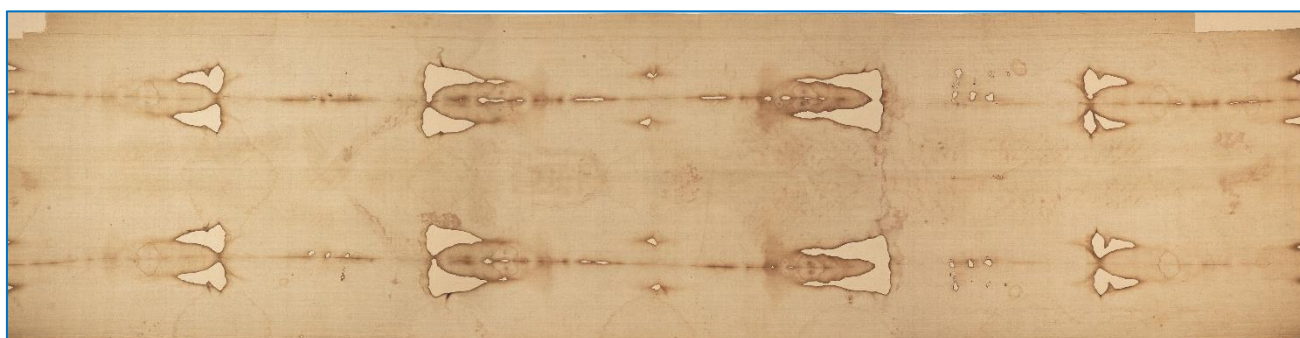


Figure 1 The Shroud of Turin, present-day appearance. The triangular-shaped marks are holes from a fire which nearly destroyed the cloth when it was housed in the Sainte Chapelle, Chambéry in 1532. Photo: Archdiocese of Turin.

enduring enigma is that the body images take on a seemingly lifelike photographic quality when they are viewed in black-and-white negatives, and that they bear no obvious signs of artistic handiwork. Historically the Shroud has often been publicly exhibited as Christ's true burial wrapping, particularly whilst under the aegis

of Italy's Savoy dynasty, its owners from the mid-15th century through to 1983, when ex-king Umberto II bequeathed it to the Vatican on condition that it should remain in Turin.

As far back as the 14th century, two high-level French ecclesiastics claimed the Shroud to be a forgery and in 1988 these allegations seemed proven when a carbon dating test 'conclusively' dated its fabric to between 1260 and 1390.¹ The last four decades of this period coincided with the Shroud's earliest known public showings in France, and this study focuses on the only two known examples of Shroud souvenir badges which date from this period: the first a badge proper, and the second a recently-discovered mold from which a badge of slightly different design would have been cast. It will be shown that the badge proper dates more than three decades later than has previously been supposed, whilst the badge represented by the mold was the one which was created for the earliest known showings.

Showings of the Shroud during the Charny period: The Historical Background

(1) The 1350s ostensions

According to a report that French bishop Pierre d'Arcis composed in 1390 for Avignon Pope Clement VII,² the Shroud's first known ostensions, or public showings, were held at a collegiate church in the tiny village of Lirey, near d'Arcis' diocesan city of

¹ P.E. Damon, *et al.*, "Radiocarbon Dating of the Shroud of Turin," *Nature*, vol. 337, no. 6208 (16 February 1989), pp. 611-615. Please note that I have decided to only list primary sources in this essay, omitting any secondary source material.

² Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Collection de Champagne, v.154, fols. 137, 138.

Troyes, approximately [*vel circa*] thirty-four years earlier than d'Arcis' time of writing, so sometime around 1356. The foundation of the modest-sized Lirey is amply recorded by an Act³ drawn up 20 June 1353. Ponderous in its detail, the document clearly identifies the church's founder as the local seigneur, Geoffroi de Charny, whom Froissart commended for the heroic manner of his death defending France's *Oriflamme* battle-standard at the battle of Poitiers in 1356 (notably the very year that Bishop d'Arcis supposed the Shroud to have been displayed in Lirey). Curiously, however, the Act contains not the slightest mention of the Shroud, let alone any instructions for how the church's six canons were expected to safeguard it, likewise it makes no mention of Charny's second wife, Jeanne de Vergy. This implies that both the Vergy marriage⁴ and the Shroud's installation at Lirey took place sometime during the three years that remained of Charny's life. Charny's son by that marriage would later affirm that it was definitely his father who had acquired the Shroud for the family,⁵ and later still, his grand-daughter Marguerite would declare the same,⁶ seeming to confirm that the Charny who died in 1356 sanctioned and patronized the Shroud's first ostensions at Lirey.

³ The Act is preserved in file 9.G.1. in the Archives of the département of the Aube at Troyes.

⁴ The main clue to the date of the marriage is a receipt that Charny issued on 20 February 1355 in which for the first time he is styled as lord of Montfort, a fief that he seems to have acquired by the Vergy marriage. See Anselme de Sainte-Marie, *Histoire Généalogique et Chronologique de la Maison Royale de France...* (Paris, 1733), p. 203.

⁵ That Charny's son made this declaration is evident from Pope Clement VII's bull of 6 January 1390, the preamble which summarizes what Charny II told Clement's legate Pierre de Thury. See Rome, Arch. Vat. Reg. Aven. 261, fol. 258 verso, transcript in Ulysse Chevalier, *Autour des Origines du Suaire de Lirey, avec documents inédits* (Paris 1903), doc. J, pp. 33-35.

⁶ The declaration by Charny's grand-daughter Marguerite is in a statement she made before a court of law at Besançon, preserved in the Archives of the department of the Aube at Troyes file 9. G. 4, fol. 2 verso 7. Transcript in Ulysse Chevalier, *Étude Critique sur l'Origine du St Suaire de Lirey-Chambéry-Turin* (Paris, 1900), op.cit, Appendix, doc. R, pp. XXIII ff.

Thirty-four years later, Bishop d'Arcis did not mince his words when he described these earliest known displays:

...the Dean... of Lirey, falsely and deceitfully, being consumed with the passion of avarice, ... procured for his church a certain cloth cunningly painted.... falsely declaring that and pretending that this was the actual *sudarium* in which our Savior Jesus Christ was enfolded in the tomb, and upon which the whole likeness of the Savior had remained thus imprinted together with the wounds which he bore. This was put about not only in the kingdom of France, but so to speak, throughout the whole world, so that from all parts people came to view it.⁷

According to d'Arcis, in charge of the Troyes diocese was Henri de Poitiers, the region's bishop from 1354-1370, already notorious for his fathering several bastard children by a mistress, Jeanne de Chenery, at a local nunnery. The Bishop's suspicions were aroused because the gospels made no mention of Christ's *sudarium* bearing any imprints and that nothing before had been heard of any such an object. He therefore "diligently" initiated enquiries, on the strength of which he concluded Lirey's *sudarium* (undoubtedly today's Turin Shroud), to be a *fraudem, artificialiter depictus*, i.e. painted by human skill rather than created miraculously as was being claimed by the Lirey church's clergy. As the seeming conclusive evidence of the clergy's guilt became known and once their "wickedness" had been discovered, they reportedly hid the *sudarium* away so that Bishop Henri could not find it.

Given Bishop D'Arcis' slightly hazy perception of when these events took place (hence his "*vel circa* thirty-four years previously"), his specific naming of Henri de Poitiers' involvement only marginally helps determine this date. On May 28, 1356

⁷ The translation of this quote from the report, also others that follow, is based on that of the Revd. Herbert Thurston, S.J., 'The Holy Shroud and the Verdict of History,' *The Month*, C1, (1903), pp. 17-89.

Bishop Henri is documented as having formally – and fulsomely - ratified Charny's foundation of the Lirey church⁸ which, in order for the ostensions to have been held within Charny's lifetime, necessarily narrows their timeframe to the four months between June and September of 1356. However, this raises a problem because during this entire period Charny was away from his seigneurial responsibilities, accompanying the French army in its struggle against the invading English. During July and August, he directed the siege of the enemy-held town of Breteuil and in September, he accompanied the king in his attempt to intercept the force led by England's Edward the Black Prince, culminating in his death at Poitiers on the 19th of that same month. So any opportunity for him to have returned to Lirey to supervise public showings of an alleged major relic of Christ's Passion -- events that, according to d'Arcis attracted pilgrims "from all parts of the world"⁹ -- seems highly unlikely, besides which the presence of no less than two English armies at large on French soil renders similarly improbable any churchman's inclination to stage such gatherings on his own initiative.

(2) The later 1380s ostensions

With the determination of a precise date of the Shroud's first-ever ostensions thereby temporarily unresolved, our attention turns to the second main round of showings under Charny family auspices, held about thirty-four years after the first. Though Bishop d'Arcis' 1390 report to Pope Clement VII is again the main historical

⁸ Troyes, Archives of the Aube 1, 17, text transcribed in Luigi Fossati, *La Santa Sindone, Nuova Luce su Antichi Documenti* (Turin, 1961), pp. 193-194

⁹ 'quod de universis mundi partibus populi confluebant.'

source, its narrative assumes rather more solid ground because the events described derive from the bishop's immediate contemporary experience and much of them can be corroborated and supplemented by independent documents. In the late 1380s, Lirey's seigneur was Geoffroi de Charny's son of the same name (for clarity henceforth to be labeled Charny II), who had been an infant at the time of his father's death. In adulthood, Charny II became a respected councilor in the entourage of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and by some strange serendipity, he married the now-deceased Bishop Henri de Poitiers' niece, Marguerite de Poitiers. Yet for reasons best known to himself, sometime in 1389 he decided the Shroud ostensions that had so enraged his late uncle-in-law should be revived.

Unlike his father, however, who appears never to have declared his *sudarium's* existence to any of the Church's hierarchy, Charny II did so forthrightly, albeit employing a crucially different nomenclature compared to that used by Lirey's clergy in the 1350s. Formally petitioning papal legate Cardinal Pierre de Thury for Avignon pope Clement VII's approval for the ostensions, Charny II eschewed any appellation of it as "the actual *sudarium* in which our Savior Jesus Christ was enfolded in the tomb." Instead, he described it merely as a "*representacionem seu figuram*" ['representation or figure'] of Christ's *sudarium*, one which had previously been much venerated ... in the Lirey church ... and which he wished to be displayed again ...so that it might there be shown to the people and venerated by the faithful." Couched in such terms, this reasonable request could hardly be refused by the papacy at Avignon.

Having neatly bypassed Bishop d'Arcis in obtaining the necessary authority, Charny II inevitably did not endear himself to his testy local bishop, but particularly abhorrent to d'Arcis was the suspiciously elaborate manner in which Charny's Lirey clergy now conducted the ostensions:

Under cover of this written [papal] authority the cloth was openly exhibited and shown to the people in the church aforesaid on great holidays, and frequently on feasts and at other times, with the utmost solemnity, even more than when the Body of Christ our Lord is exposed, by two priests vested in albs with stoles and maniples and using the greatest possible reverence, with lighted torches and upon a lofty platform constructed for this special purpose.

Furthermore:

...although it [i.e. the Shroud], is not publicly stated to be the true *sudarium* of Christ, nevertheless this is given out and noised abroad in private, and so it is believed by many, the more so, because, as stated above, it was on the previous occasion declared to be the true *sudarium* of Christ, and by a certain ingenious manner of speech it is now in the said church styled not the *sudarium* but the *sanctuarium*,¹⁰ which to the ears of the common folk ... sounds much the same thing,

Despite the forcefulness of Bishop d'Arcis' protest and his robust and lengthy invocation of the scandal that happened 34 years previously, 300 miles away at the papal court at Avignon Pope Clement VII appears to have treated the matter with relative equanimity, ruling that just so long as the Lirey clergy minimized the ceremonial and made it clear that the Shroud was simply a "representacionem seu figuram," the ostensions should be allowed to continue.¹¹ Charny II died eight years later, having spent much of the remaining period on crusade, culminating in the disastrous Nicopolis venture of 1396.

¹⁰ This would have been a play on *saint suaire*, *suaire* then, as today, being the vernacular French equivalent of the Latin *sudarium*. See discussion in the 'Nomenclature' section at the end of this article.

¹¹ Rome, Archives of the Vatican, Reg. Aven, 261, fol. 258 verso.

Because he had not produced a son, it was his eldest daughter Marguerite who took over responsibility for the Shroud – and equally forthrightly.

Thus, concerned by the widespread social unrest which broke out following France's defeat at Agincourt, in 1418 Marguerite and her second husband Humbert de Villersexel assumed direct physical charge of the Shroud from the Lirey clergy, transferring it for security reasons along with the church's other valuables to the greater safety of Humbert's domains in far-eastern France. Typifying the strange ambivalence with which the Charnys treated it, although the receipt for it that she and her husband gave the Lirey clergy continued dutifully to describe it as merely a 'figura ac repraesentatio,' they placed it at the top of the listed items, thereby giving it precedence over several theoretically authentic relics, including a particle of the True Cross and a hair of the Virgin Mary.¹² Likewise, in 1443, when the Lirey clergy issued a lawsuit for the now-widowed Marguerite to return it to them, she strongly resisted their appeal, suddenly insisting that it was truly Christ's true "saint suaire," and therefore far too "precious" to be entrusted to the humble Lirey church's manifestly inadequate security.¹³ Ten years later, in a complicated arrangement with Duke Louis of Savoy and his Cypriot wife Anne de Lusignan, Marguerite staged highly orchestrated public ostensions of the Shroud at Savoyard Geneva¹⁴ that for the first time evoked no protest

¹² Troyes, Archives of the department of the Aube, file 9. G. 4.

¹³ Troyes, Archives of the department of the Aube file 9. G. 4, fol. 2 verso 7; Paris, Bibl. Nat., Coll de Champagne, v. 154, fol. 147.

¹⁴ Walter Zurbuchen, 'Le Saint Suaire à Genève en 1453,' *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève*, vol 3 (Geneva, 1978), pp. 255-284.

from a bishop. This feat was achieved, via a classically 15th-century piece of nepotism, as Geneva's bishop at this time was Duke Louis and Duchess Anne's teenage son Pierre of Savoy. Also in 1453, elderly, childless, and still hassled by the Lirey clergy's demands to return the Shroud to them, Marguerite *sotto voce* ceded it to the Savoy ducal couple, in whose descendants' hands it would proudly remain for the next five centuries, now consistently claimed to be the genuine article.

The Shroud Badges

1: The Cluny Shroud Pilgrim Badge

From throughout this turbulent century of the Shroud 's Charny tutelage there has, until recently, survived just one badge that can be positively identified as having been created as a souvenir for pilgrims who visited the so controversial ostensions held at Lirey (**Fig. 2**). Now housed in the Musée de Cluny,¹⁵ it was discovered in 1855 by Parisian merchant and amateur archaeologist, Arthur Forgeais,¹⁶ amidst the mud under the Port-au-Change bridge along with numerous artifacts similarly retrieved in the course of the massive engineering works by which Baron Haussmann transformed central Paris between 1853 and 1870.

¹⁵ Paris, Musée de Cluny, ref. CL 4752.

¹⁶ Arthur Forgeais, *Collection de plombs historiés trouvés dans la Seine et recueillis par Arthur Forgeais*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1862-1866), vol. 4, pp. 105-108.



Figure 2 Shroud pilgrim badge, Musée de Cluny, Paris. Photo: copyright Réunion des Musées Nationaux

Fabricated from lead and tin, and measuring 45 mm x 62 mm, this pilgrim badge has suffered serious damage to its upper and lower parts, probably from the very dredging work which brought it to light. Nevertheless, what remains reflects fine workmanship. Readily discernible is a large cloth that is being held up by two clergy whose heads are now broken off, only their hands having survived. A background herringbone pattern, indicating its weave, presents a relief image of the back and front of a naked human figure, laid out as if in death, its right hand overlying its left wrist, and its left foot

twisted inwards. Trickle, seen extending upwards and downwards at the small of the back and at the feet, indicate blood flows. Immediately below the displayed cloth is a roundel depicting Christ's empty tomb, from which rises a tall cross hung with the crown of thorns. Flanking the roundel are two heraldic shields that in turn are flanked by other items of the Arma Christi, or relics of Christ's Passion. From right to left these are the column of the scourging, the scourge whip, the nails of the crucifixion together with the pincers used to remove these, and the lance plunged into Christ's side as described in John 19: 34. The shield on the badge's left side, which encases three smaller shields, represents the Charny family's gules three inescutcheons argent coat of arms, whilst the right-hand shield, featuring three five-petaled flowers, corresponds to the Vergy family's gules, three cinquefoils d'or heraldry, and is thereby identifiable as that of Charny's second wife, Jeanne de Vergy.

Not only does this badge constitute the earliest known artwork featuring a grave cloth of Christ depicted as "imprinted" with both the front and the back of his crucified body,¹⁷ it also quite specifically and unmistakably depicts the cloth now known as the Turin Shroud. Despite its diminutive size, one can readily distinguish the same distinctive herringbone pattern of the cloth's weave, the same irregularities of the disposition of the nude figures' hands and feet, and the same trickles at either side of the small of the back, trickles which historical sources have attributed to injuries from the iron chain which bound Christ to a column whilst he was scourged.¹⁸ Furthermore, the

¹⁷ Byzantine *epitaphioi*, originating in the late 12th century, featured only the front of the body.

¹⁸ 'la chaine de fert', Ulysse Chevalier, *Autour des Origines...* (op.cit, note 5), document P, p.50. Modern-day medical interpretations favour spillage from the lance wound.

inclusion of Jeanne de Vergy's arms seemingly automatically dates the badge to sometime within the brief period of her marriage to Charny, i.e. c. 1354-1356. Although it might be argued that perhaps Jeanne had authorized the ostensions to be held very shortly after Charny's death (thereby still in line with Bishop d'Arcis' 'murky dating'), the disposition of the heraldry seems firmly to rule against any such interpretation. This is because the Charny coat of arms, notably appearing immediately below the Shroud's all-important frontal image of Christ, is set at the left on the badge,¹⁹ which to a heraldist indicates Charny to have been very much alive and in charge at the time that the badge was created.

Inevitably a niggling question mark is raised by Bishop Henri's fulsome approval of the Lirey church's foundation as late in Charny's career as the end of May 1356, also that the ultra-pious Charny, despite several minor dealings with the Avignon papacy, appears never to have applied for the requisite papal approval for the showings of such a major Passion relic. Nevertheless, the Cluny badge seems to prove that the first ostensions of the Shroud at Lirey must have been held under Charny's auspices in his lifetime. Certainly, it has been specifically because of this understanding that, throughout the last half century of my studies of the Shroud, I have felt obliged to accept 1355 as the likeliest date for when the first public showings of it were held, until this acceptance was overturned by the completely unexpected discovery of the badgemaking mold which follows.

¹⁹ In heraldry sinister and dexter are generally understood to mean left and right as seen from behind the shield, therefore in reverse to what might otherwise be expected.

2: The Machy Shroud Pilgrim Badge

Measuring 92 mm width, 72 mm high, and 26 mm in thick, the Machy badge mold comprises a 320-gram piece of schist carved in reverse, in the manner of a coin die, for the casting of pilgrim badges. Reportedly, it was found in 2009 by a never-identified “jogger” who noticed it lying in a field at Machy, the village next door to Lirey, whereupon it was purchased by a local-history enthusiast, Alain Hourseau,²⁰ in whose possession it remains. Most shamefully, the “jogger” story is now understood to have been created for cover purposes. The actuality, as Hourseau recently became obliged to admit to me,²¹ was that it was dug up by a metal detectorist group operating on private land in contravention of French law. Though the mold unfortunately remains in private hands, setting aside this disquieting provenance (and it can only be hoped that the date and location of the find are not similar untruths), the genuineness of its medieval date and its importance for a better understanding of the Shroud’s earliest showings at Lirey can hardly be doubted.

Like the Cluny badge, the Machy badge mold has suffered extensive damage, probably from farming activities in the field in which it was unearthed. Nonetheless one can immediately see two clergy displaying a large cloth, similar to, but differing significantly from its Cluny counterpart. Thanks to modern technology, the design of

²⁰ Alain Hourseau, *Autour du Saint Suaire et de la Collégiale de Lirey (Aube)*, Books on Demand, 2012.

²¹ This admission arose when, in 2018, Hourseau informed me that the same “jogger” had come across an actual badge near the same location as the mold. Because I recognized this object as not of the Lirey/Turin Shroud, but of the Besançon Shroud, dating three centuries later, I questioned whether the “jogger” might be a trickster duping Hourseau with items that he had obtained on eBay. To my astonishment Hourseau defended this individual’s integrity, whilst admitting to me that the “jogger” story was a cover-up for the detectorist activity. At this point I ceased the correspondence.



Figure 3 The badge making mold, created for making souvenir badges of the Shroud, as found at Machy, near Lirey. This is here reproduced mirror-reversed to convey the appearance of the badge proper. Note the left-to-right reversal of the badges' position, compared to that on the Cluny version. Photo: Hugh Duncan.

the lost original badge is easily reproducible by a simple image reversal (**Fig. 3**), and for easy discussion purposes the remarks that follow will mostly pertain to this reversed image, i.e., that of the badge proper, rather than to the extant mold from which it was cast.

In contrast to the total loss that the Cluny version suffered to its upper portion, enough of the Machy badge's equivalent area has survived to reveal the heads of its two officiating clergy as bareheaded and tonsured, representing regular clergy, corresponding to those at the Lirey church, rather than any mitred bishops. Exactly as on the Cluny badge, they are wearing capes with a wide trim, fastened by square buckles, above vertically pleated albs, such "high ceremonial" apparel, as Bishop d'Arcis noted, pointedly signaling their attributing a similarly high level of sanctity to the cloth that they hold up for viewing. Of the cloth itself, the area that once depicted this is where the mold that has suffered the greatest damage, such that there is virtually nothing left of its body images and very little of the cloth region except for the bottom left-hand corner, in which the rendering of the weave is markedly less accurate to that of the Shroud weave when compared to the Cluny badge.

Nonetheless, unmistakably indicating this cloth be one and the same as that shown at the Lirey church is the heraldry. Again, as in the case of the Cluny badge, the Charny and the Vergy shields appear immediately below the Shroud, except – crucially – that they are now reversed in their positioning. It is Jeanne de Vergy's family coat of arms which appears on the left-hand, or dexter, side (again very likely set immediately

below the Shroud's frontal image of Christ²² though this is too effaced for any certainty), whilst the Charny arms are relegated to the subordinate sinister side at right. Adding further weight to the likely considerable significance of this positional shift is the badge's inscription which, unlike that of Cluny, happens to have survived intact. It reads: "SVAIRE IhV," "suaire" having already been noted as the French vernacular equivalent of the Latin *sudarium*, whilst IhV is an abbreviation of the Greek genitive ΙΗΣΟΥ or 'of Jesus,' so "the sudarium of Christ."

Here therefore, on a souvenir badge the mold for which was found little more than a mile from Lirey, can be seen the very same authenticity claim which generated such outrage from Bishop Henri de Poitiers. Also, and most tellingly, it is Jeanne de Vergy, not her husband, who is revealed as the prime mover behind these dubious showings, strongly suggesting she was acting in this role because her husband was dead. Notable also is that the artistry with which the mold has been crafted is decidedly inferior to that of its Cluny badge counterpart. Besides its already noted inaccurate rendering of the Shroud's weave, it does not have Cluny's delicate renderings of the various relics of the Passion. Instead, the equivalent area depicts merely a relatively crude Veronica type Christ head, the rest having been left as blank space.

If, as seems evident, such a badge type seems to be attributable to the earliest ostensions of the Shroud at Lirey, probably now to be re-dated to 1357 to conform with Bishop d'Arcis' imprecise *vel circa* 1356, it necessarily demands some attention to

²² Throughout the near seven centuries of the Shroud's known history in Europe depictions of showings invariably feature the frontal image being displayed at viewer's left, the liturgical right.

whatever is known of Jeanne de Vergy that might explain her role as the prime authorizer of these controversial events. Here an immediate source of surprise is that although her birthdate is unrecorded, she lived on for a remarkable seventy-two years²³ after Charny's death. Hence whilst her husband's age was around fifty in 1356, she could have been barely older than a teenager in this year and would suddenly have found herself singlehandedly not only looking after a newborn infant, the future Charny II, but also responsible for supporting the material needs of the newly founded Lirey church with its six resident canons and their various assistants. Heightening the problem of the loss of her breadwinner, prices throughout France in the immediate aftermath of the country's Poitiers defeat are known to have risen alarmingly that, along with a social unrest it caused, would burgeon into the Jacquerie revolt of 1358.

Clearly Jeanne, or rather more particularly, the significant size college of canons living under her patronage, would have urgently needed a significant new source of income. And they could scarcely not have been aware that only six years earlier the city of Rome, which had similarly been suffering some hard times, had attracted literally thousands of pilgrims for Holy Year showings of its Veronica cloth imprinted with Christ's facial likeness. As was common for such events, there had been a flourishing trade in souvenir pilgrim badges, the Veronica face on the Machy badge notably bearing a close resemblance to one of these.

²³ She made out her second will in 1428, once preserved in the archives of the abbey of Theuley. See A. Duschesne, *Histoire Généalogique de la Maison de Vergy* (Paris 1625), p. 387.

Broadly, therefore, two alternative scenarios present themselves. The first and most straightforward is that, faced with the economic crisis after Charny's death, Lirey's evidently unscrupulous Dean found a clever artist whom he commissioned to "fake up" the present-day Turin Shroud. Though this demands the ready accessibility of a forger of an astonishing skill and ingenuity, it conforms to Bishop d'Arcis' accusations and it has the support of the 1988 carbon dating. The second scenario, rather more complicated, though consistent with Charny II and Marguerite de Charny's later attestations, is that Charny --in unexplained circumstances-- had legitimately acquired the Shroud sometime before his death, and, for reasons best known to himself, he withheld this information from any member of the Church's hierarchy, despite his having had perfectly cordial relations with high ecclesiastics even up to papal level. After his death (if not before), the Shroud was brought to Lirey for its clergy's safekeeping where an honest Dean unwisely viewed it as a heaven-sent opportunity for generating some urgently needed income for his community.

In either instance, rather than go through the time-consuming ecclesiastical protocols with all the awkward questions that might be asked, Lirey's Dean evidently chose to use as his authorization his lay patronage by the Charny family. For this purpose, because the founder was dead, the only approval he needed would have been that of Charny's widow, the young and arguably pliant Jeanne de Vergy, acting on behalf of her infant son Charny II. This explains why it is her coat of arms in the prime position on the badge, whilst the badge mold's find location and its relatively poor craftsmanship suggests a local production created in some haste. But if this is indeed

what transpired it was a seriously foolish miscalculation. An overlooked and angered Bishop Henri de Poitiers understandably asked awkward questions, found what seemed to him to be clear evidence of fraudulent claims from Lirey's Dean, and caused the ostensions to be shut down. In the event, Jeanne de Vergy remarried relatively quickly and Lirey's collegiate community somehow survived into the next century, but it would take well over three decades for the controversial "relic" to be brought out again.

3: The Cluny Pilgrim Badge Re-considered

If it can be considered now reasonably established that the Machy badge was made for the first-ever ostensions of the Shroud at Lirey, and that these gatherings were held under Jeanne de Vergy's patronage shortly after Charny's death, this necessitates some re-evaluation of our earlier reluctant dating of the Cluny badge to c. 1355, i.e., shortly before Charny's death. As earlier noted, there has seemed to be no totally firm evidence, apart from the Cluny badge, that Charny at any time formally deposited the Shroud at the Lirey church, let alone staged any public showings of it there. Thus his very pious semi-autobiographical poem the *Livre Charny*, completed in 1352 for the foundation of France's short-lived Company of the Star, contains not a word concerning the Shroud, let alone about how and when he may have acquired it.²⁴ His lengthy and tiresomely micro-managing Act of Foundation for the Lirey church, drawn up in the following year, makes no mention of the object, neither do the three separate petitions

²⁴ Ian Wilson, *The Book of Geoffroi de Charny, with the Livre de Charny* edited and translated by Nigel Bryant (Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2021).

on relatively minor clerical matters that he addressed to Pope Innocent VI in 1354.²⁵ Likewise Bishop Henri de Poitiers' glowing approval of the Lirey church's foundation, dated 28 May 1356, strongly suggests that the Shroud had not been entrusted to the Lirey church even at this very late stage of Charny's life. Accordingly, because of still trying somehow to accommodate the Cluny badge within Charny's lifetime, the Machy badge mold's discovery initially suggested to me that Charny might have commissioned the Cluny version for ostensions of the Shroud held privately for some exclusive inner circle of fellow nobility, maybe even at his house in Paris, the knowledge of its existence otherwise kept secret, particularly from members of the church's hierarchy. However as Sarah Blick cogently advised,²⁶ the fundamental intention behind pilgrim badges was for them to advertise and promulgate whatever sacred object or shrine that they signified, besides which any privileged noble, used every day to wearing insignia made of gold or silver, would automatically have shied from sporting a badge of Cluny's humble, mass production materials, despite its high level of artistry.

Radical though it seems, the alternative possibility has to be that the Cluny badge was created not in Charny's lifetime, or even shortly after, but instead for the similarly controversial ostensions that his son Geoffroi de Charny II would stage at Lirey in the late 1380s. Hitherto such a possibility has always appeared highly unlikely. This is not

²⁵ 30 January, A grant of the privilege of *ius patronatus*, Rome, Arch. Vat. Reg. Suppl. 27. f. 24; also 30 January, a grant of special concessions for two clerics under Charny's patronage, Rome, Arch. Vat. Reg. Vat. 226 fol.136; 2 August, a grant of indulgences to the Lirey church, Rome, Archives of the Vatican Reg. Aven. 147 [Innocent VI] A* IX*, p. III, vol. XXVII, fol. 54.

²⁶ Email of 5 June 2014.

least because no later than 1386 Charny II had married Marguerite de Poitiers,²⁷ as a result the Poitiers family coat of arms would be expected to be paired with his, not the Vergy arms of his mother's family. Nevertheless, even thirty-four years after the earlier ostensions, Jeanne de Vergy remained very much alive, probably not much older than her late forties. And because Marguerite de Poitiers's uncle the late Bishop Henri had so forcefully opposed the Shroud's earlier ostensions, it could be that her new husband was concerned that high-ranking members of her family might take some serious exception should their heraldry be linked to fresh showings of such a controversial object.

To check out the viability of such a radically revised dating for the Cluny badge, one approach seemed to try to determine whether certain elements to the badge's design might be more typical of the late rather than the middle part of the fourteenth century. This led me to the University of Nijmegen's Dr Willy Piron, developer of the Kunera database with its thousands of examples of late medieval pilgrim badges. As Dr. Piron pointed out to me, coats of arms on badges are relatively rare, and badge design styles in general tend not to exhibit significant differences over a span of a just few decades. Still, several late 15th-century pilgrim badges for a cultic Virgin and Child statue at Aarschot, Flanders, happen to feature similarly paired coats of arms, those of Philip I of Croÿ and his son William of Croÿ-Chièvre (**Fig. 4**).²⁸ According to Dr. Piron's understanding of

²⁷ See Bernard and Henri Prost, *Inventaires Mobiliers et Extrait des Comptes des Ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois (1363-1477)* vol 2 *Philippe le Hardi 1378-1390*, Paris, Leroux, 1908-1913, entry 1438, p. 242. Dated 1386, this is the earliest known reference to Charny II being married.

²⁸ Objects no 00412, 000413, 00414, 04385, 10671, 10797 and 13146 in the Kunera digital collection.



Figure 4 The Aarschot pilgrim badge, featuring paired heraldry as on the Machy and Cluny examples. Photo: Kunera, <http://www.kunera.nl>



Figure 5 Shroud pilgrim badge preserved in Brussels, probably created for the 1453, ostensions in Geneva, the first for which there was no local episcopal opposition. Photo: Royal Library of Belgium

these Aarschot badges, William of Croÿ set his father Philip's coat of arms on it, alongside his own, as a kind of *Ahnenprobe* or pedigree of nobility for the statue, simultaneously honoring his father for having his having transformed Aarschot into a famous place of pilgrimage.²⁹ Dr. Piron therefore thought it very plausible that the Charny-Vergy arms on the Cluny badge could have had an *Ahnenprobe* purpose,

²⁹ Email of 23 May 2016.

suggesting that by it Charny II was similarly honoring a parent, in this instance his mother, for her having introduced the Shroud cult to Lirey.

An additional benefit from my contacting Dr. Piron was that his website brought to my attention an intriguing third example of a Shroud pilgrim badge. Preserved in the Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels (**Fig. 5**),³⁰ it differs from the other examples, lacking the Charny coat of arms and depicting the Shroud being held up by three mitred bishops. This suggests that it dates from around the time of the 1453 Geneva showings, when the ducal Savoy family's involvement had just neutralized the earlier episcopal skepticism towards the Shroud's authenticity. The Brussels badge, like the Machy mold, still has an intact inscription, which consists of a simple banner bearing the single word SVAIRE.

With this in mind, the tiniest detail at the base of the Cluny badge now assumes some unexpectedly high interest. For just discernible below the bottom point of the Charny shield is what appears to the merest vestige of the top left-hand end portion of a banner, the right-hand end part of which is even more elusively discernible below the Vergy shield. If this interpretation of the detail is correct, then the banner represents the start of a stylistic feature that would continue into the 15th century, thereby itself suggesting that chronologically the Cluny badge followed rather than preceded its Machy counterpart.

³⁰ Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, Brussels, Catalogue no. 23467.



Figure 6 Kunera Shroud medallion #10980. Probably late 15th century. Photo: Kunera <http://www.kunera.nl>



Figure 7 Kunera Shroud medallion #15469. Probably late 15th century. Photo: <http://www.kunera.nl>

Furthermore, the Kunera website also happens to include two Shroud pilgrimage souvenirs in medallion form, one octagonal³¹ (**Fig. 6**), the other round³² (**Fig 7**). These similarly feature three bishops holding up the cloth accompanied by a banner-borne inscription, except that the inscription now reads “S[aint] SVAIRE” or “Holy Suaire.” Such a return to the Shroud being described as the genuine article indicates that these last two examples most likely belong to the period when the Shroud had become fully established in Savoy custody, around the late 15th century. This suggests a hypothetical sequence for the five pilgrimage souvenirs arranged chronologically as follows:

³¹ Object no.10980 in the Kunera digital collection.

³² Object no. 15469 in the Kunera digital collection.

	DATE	ITEM	INSCRIPTION	MODE
1	<i>c.</i> 1357	Machy badge (Fig. 3)	SVAIRE IhV	Straight line of lettering
2	1389-90	Cluny badge (Fig. 2)	(lost)	Fragment of a banner
3	<i>c.</i> 1453	Brussels badge (Fig. 5)	SVAIRE	banner
4	Late 15 th c.	Kunera medallion #10980 (Fig. 6)	S(aint) SVAIRE	banner
5	Late 15 th c.	Kunera medallion #15469 (Fig. 7)	S(aint) SVAIRE	banner

Readily apparent from this sequence is that the most “odd-man-out” of the five is the Machy badge, with its absence of a banner and its lettering set in a straight line. Because the Cluny badge’s lost lower section seems to have taken the form of a banner, chronologically Cluny appears to belong amongst the later examples, with items 3-5, and most certainly after rather than before Machy. Furthermore, its closeness to the Brussels badge strongly suggests that its lost inscription read simply SVAIRE, thereby readily according with Charny II’s policy of avoiding publicly claiming the Shroud as authentic. Obviously, the only proof of such an assertion would be if an intact badge of the Cluny type one day came to light, but in the interim the best available hypothetical reconstructions of the two badges are as **Fig. 8** and **Fig. 9**.

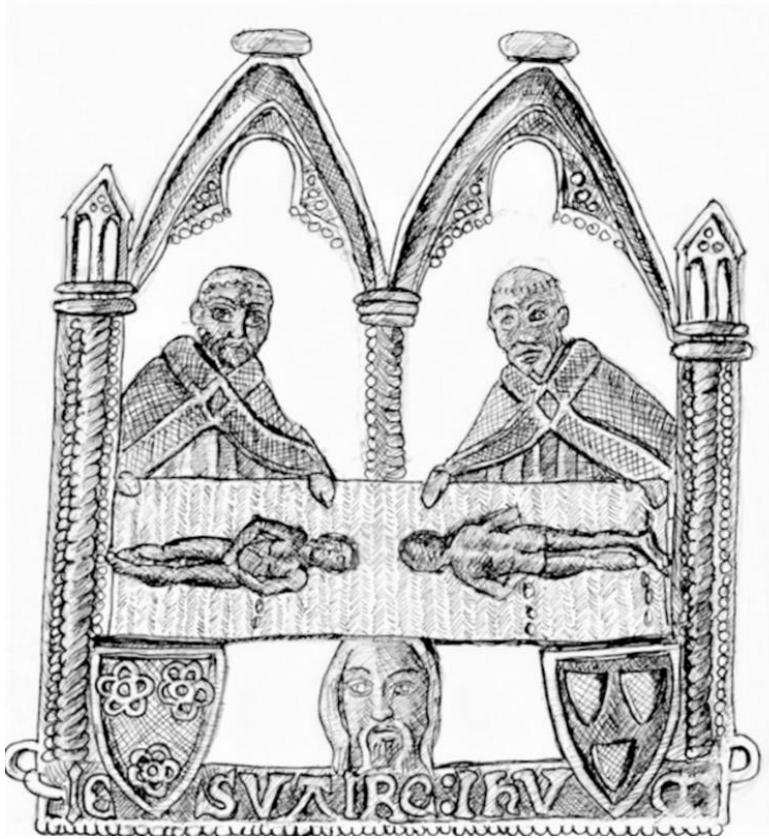
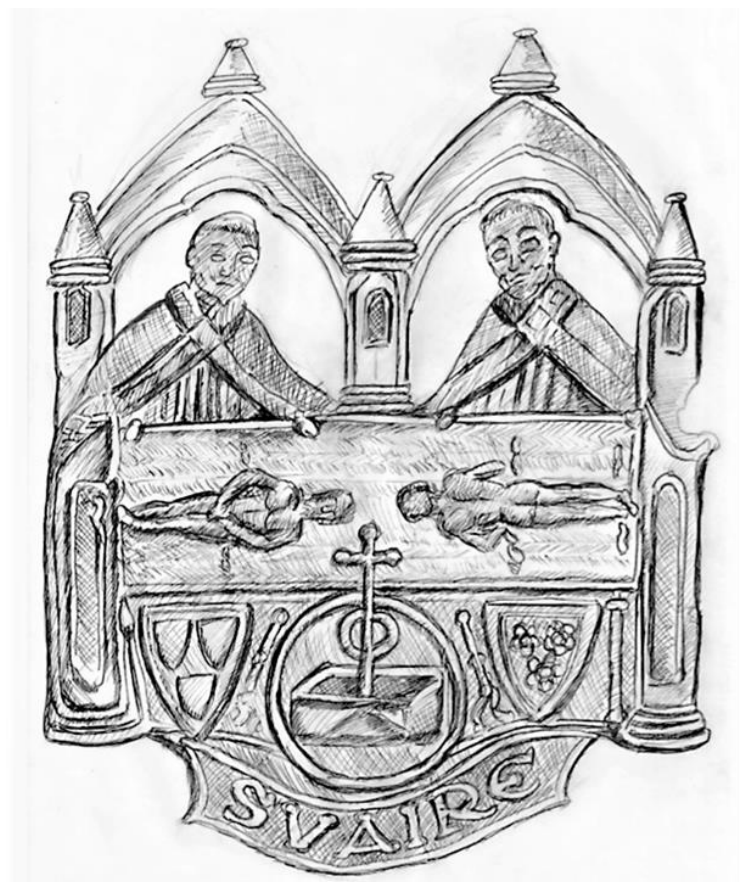


Figure 8 A hypothetical reconstruction of the Machy badge as created for the c. 1357 ostensions. The badge's lop-sided appearance is faithful to the mold and seems to be a further indication of inferior local craftsmanship. Photo: Ian Wilson.

Figure 9 A hypothetical reconstruction of the Cluny badge as created for the 1389/90 ostensions. The upper architectural archways detail is necessarily conjectural, likewise the inscription on the banner. Photo: Ian Wilson.



4: A Revised Chronology

(a) The Machy badge

The irony of the Machy and Cluny pilgrim badges is that, although at first sight their heraldry suggests that they were both created whilst Geoffroi de Charny and Jeanne de Vergy were alive together as a married couple, i.e., c. 1354-1356, now it would seem that neither of them derives from this brief period. In this regard, the Cluny pilgrim badge (in particular) has for decades caused considerable error and confusion for writers on the history of the Turin Shroud, including myself.

Yet even with this confusion hopefully now corrected, it remains difficult to determine exactly when after Charny's death Lirey's dean may have staged the first Shroud ostensions for which the Machy badge was created. From Bishop d'Arcis' *vel circa* 1356 it seems unlikely that this could have been much more than two or three years later. Furthermore, it may be no coincidence that Bishop Henri de Poitiers castigated the ostensions as being for money-raising purposes and that those same years were those of widespread financial hardship. Following France's heavy defeat at the battle of Poitiers, the country's central government was imposing stringent new taxation to pay for the massive ransom that the English were demanding for the release of King Jean II, held prisoner in England. In Lirey's Champagne region, armed bands of soldiery, disbanded after the battle, were looting and pillaging, necessitating an urgent upgrade for the fortifications of the main town, Troyes. High churchman though he was, Bishop Henri de Poitiers took it upon himself personally to raise the funds for these defense operations, in addition to which he was heavily burdened with the costs of long-

standing, ongoing construction work on his unfinished cathedral at Troyes.

Accordingly, with a large portion of his revenue deriving from public donations in the cathedral's collecting boxes,³³ he would inevitably have perceived any independent fund-raising on the part of the Lirey church, a venture that because of its collegiate status was not under his direct diocesan jurisdiction, as directly competitive to his own efforts.³⁴ By 1358 however, English brigandage and other major hostilities around the Troyes region, inclusive of the burning of Henri's Aix-en-Othe palace, had so sharply intensified that concern over any such local competition activities would not have seemed not worth the bother, besides which the Lirey clergy were hardly likely have launched their ostensions at a time of such high danger to the peaceable pilgrim visitors whom they wanted to attract. All in all, 1357 would seem the likeliest year that the earliest Lirey ostensions were staged, with the Machy mold arguably created by a local craftsman in the same year, its design probably commissioned by Robert de Caillac, the dean whom Charny had appointed, who would die in 1358.

(b) The Cluny Badge

In the case of the ostensions for which the Cluny badge was created, those conducted under Charny II's auspices, thankfully there is no such chronological uncertainty, and even though the most crucial document, Bishop d'Arcis' damning

³³ Stephen Murray, *Building Troyes Cathedral: The Late Gothic Campaigns* (Indiana University Press 1987), p. 23ff.

³⁴ This incidentally renders the motives behind his "diligent" investigations of the Shroud rather less altruistic than they might otherwise appear.

report to Pope Clement VII bears no date. From other surviving related documents, most notably a “royal” warrant to seize the Shroud, dated August 1389,³⁵ and a report by the *bailli* sent to carry out this order, dated the following month,³⁶ it can reliably be construed that Bishop d’Arcis wrote his report to Pope Clement early in 1390, and that the ostensions of which he was complaining had begun during the previous year.

Just as in the case of Bishop Henri de Poitiers, Bishop Pierre d’Arcis had some very understandable reasons for being angered by a money-making clerical venture (inclusive of the sale of souvenir badges, as evident from the Cluny example), being held within his diocese yet outside his jurisdiction, and on which he had not been consulted. Not only was construction work continuing on his still-unfinished Cathedral in Troyes, but some of this work had also clearly been sub-standard. During the Christmas of 1389, one of the enclosing arches of the clerestory collapsed, creating serious damage in the nave area, shortly followed by the rose window of the north transept falling out.³⁷ Eye-wateringly costly repairs were urgently needed, hence it is not too difficult to understand d’Arcis’ outrage that elaborate competitive ostensions were happening at tiny Lirey and that these revolved around the very same image-bearing *sudarium* that he thought his predecessor Bishop Henri had satisfactorily eliminated thirty-four years previously.

³⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection de Champagne, vol. 154, fol. 128. In this warrant Bishop d’Arcis appears to have activated via the royal council at the very point in time at which King Charles VI and Charny were otherwise distracted taking part in the prolonged pageantry celebrating Isabel of Bavaria’s coronation as Queen of France, 23 August 1389.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 130.

³⁷ Stephen Murray, *Building Troyes Cathedral*, op.cit., p. 35.

Yet the big difference between 1389/90 and the 1350 is that earlier, it had been the Lirey church's very likely elderly dean behind the showings, now it was its vigorous overlord Geoffroi de Charny II, a knight well-placed in court circles who was in the prime of his life. Indicative of Charny II's unabashedly hands-on involvement, Bishop d'Arcis describes him as formally requesting the original papal permission; as "holding the said cloth with his own hands on a certain solemn feast and showing it to the people"; and (in the teeth of fierce opposition from d'Arcis), as arranging for the royal warrant for the *sudarium's* seizure to be annulled.³⁸ All of which necessarily gives rise to the question – why should Charny II, after thirty-four years of the so controversial object having been discreetly "hidden away," have decided upon resurrecting it at this particular point in time?

Here study of Charny II's career seems to provide the best available clue. For much of the previous decade he had been a prominent aide to Duke Philip the Bold of Burgundy at the time when the duke, along with his brother Jean Duke of Berry, had acted as a regent during the minority of their nephew king Charles VI. During this period, Charny II as a ducal (and royal), chamberlain,³⁹ had undertaken high-level diplomatic missions to Scotland⁴⁰ and had married.⁴¹ However, in 1388 King Charles VI, just before his twentieth birthday, insisted on assuming direct charge of his kingdom, causing his regent uncles to lose their royal powers and all that went with these. So, it

³⁸ All three of these activities on Charny II's part are described in Bishop d'Arcis 1390 report to Pope Clement VII.

³⁹ "...chambellan du roy et du duc de Bourgogne." For source, see footnote 27.

⁴⁰ Recorded in Froissart's *Chroniques*, see Herbert Maxwell *A History of the House of Douglas from the Earliest Times*, vol I, p.100 ff.

⁴¹ See footnote 27.

was no coincidence that from 1390 onwards Charny II turned his attention to crusading, first, in the July of 1390, on the Barbary coast of North Africa,⁴² and next (albeit less certainly), around two years later, with the Teutonic knights in Prussia,⁴³ and finally as a special advisor and personal bodyguard to the Duke of Burgundy's eldest son Jean de Nevers when the latter led a major though ill-fated crusade which laid siege to the Turkish-held town of Nicopolis in 1396.⁴⁴

Considerable finance was required to take part in such ventures, and one particularly expensive component was acquiring a full suit of plate armor. Providing significantly greater protection than chainmail, full plate armour had only been recently developed, yet Charny II's tombstone (**Fig.10**), features him clad head-to-toe in precisely such protection. This thereby suggests that Charny II's prime motive behind the 1389/90 Shroud ostensions, together with their accompanying money-making activities such as selling Cluny design souvenir badges, may well have been to best equip himself for the entirely laudable purpose of trying to win back the Holy Land for Christianity.

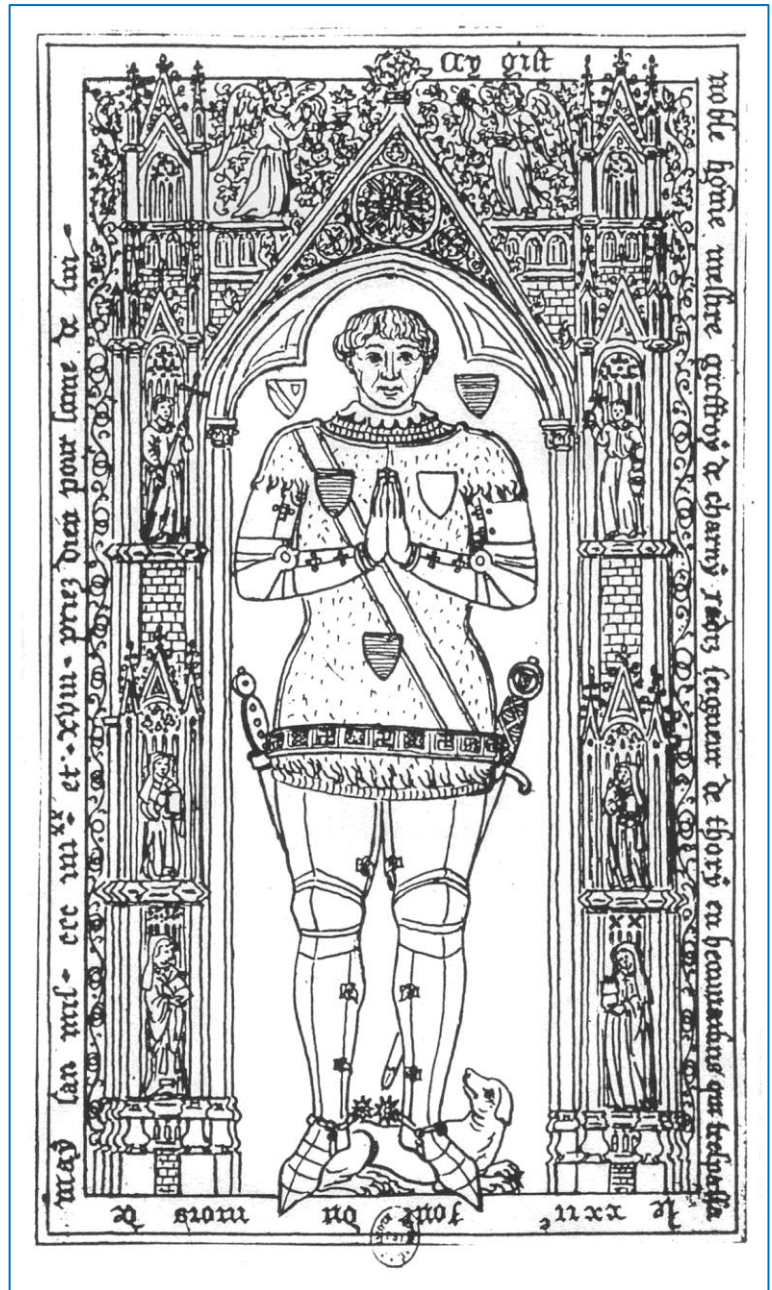
In this same context, the Cluny pilgrim badge's exquisite detailing of the Arma Christi, i.e. cross, the crown of thorns, the scourge whip, the column of the scourging, the nails and pincers, may now be seen as of rather more significance than before. A

⁴² See Jacques Paviot, "Noblesse et croisade à la fin du Moyen Âge, » *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes* 13 (2006) paragraph 21.

⁴³ His involvement with this crusade is mainly by inference and awaits a much-needed full biography accrediting him with the authorship of the Charny *Livre de Chevalerie*, hitherto attributed to his father. See the author's *Book of Geoffroi de Charny* (in press), referenced in footnote 24.

⁴⁴ Bertrand Schnerb, 'Le contingent franco-bourguignon à la croisade de Nicopolis, » *Actes du colloque international 'Nicopolis, 1396-1996', Dijon 1996, Annales de Bourgogne* vol. 68, (1996), pp. 59-75.

Figure 10 Tombstone of Charny II at the Cistercian abbey of Froidmont (destroyed in World War I), showing him in the full plate armor that he would have worn on crusade. From a drawing in the Roger de Gaignières collection. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.



prominent advocate for Charny II and his fellow-Burgundians' 1390s crusading efforts was Philippe de Mézières, former chancellor of Cyprus, who completed the final edition of his *Nova Religio Milicie Passionis Jhesu Christi pro adquisicione Sancte Civitatis Jherusalem et Terre Sancte* in 1396. In this work, a copy of which is known to have been carried on the Nicopolis crusade, Mézières pointedly urged that the crusade's participating knights should recite this prayer every hour that they were awake:

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God... piously reviving your most bitter yet fruitful passion, the *crown of thorns*, the *cross*, the *nails* and the *lance*, the *column* and the *iron chain*, the cruel scourging and the crowning with thorns, and the most copious spilling of your precious blood... [grant that all these be interposed] between your judgement and my soul, now ... and especially at the hour of my death.⁴⁵

The italicised Arma Christi listed in the prayer are those that are painstakingly depicted on the Cluny badge, and given that Mézières had been living in Paris since the 1380s, notably at the prestigious Church of the Celestins in Paris where Charny II's father's remains had been royally honored with a second funeral and hero's tomb in 1370, arguably this feature further reinforces that the badge dates from the end of the 14th century rather than from its middle years as hitherto supposed. Indeed, the very decision to feature Christ's tomb on the badge – which would not be repeated in any later examples – may well have been Charny II's way of tacitly declaring the money-raising ostensions to be for the noble cause of recapturing all Christendom's holiest site, Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As the very title of Mézières' *Nova Religio Milicie Passionis* makes clear, this recapture would certainly have been the Nicopolis crusade's ultimate goal, had the venture not been so humiliatingly defeated at the hands of Sultan Bayezid and his Ottoman Turks in 1396.

Nomenclature

One final point needs to be made. Throughout this study, even though the cloth

⁴⁵ Philippe de Mézières 'La sustance de la Chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist en françois' in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 813, fol. 32r, cited from A.H Hamdy, "Philippe de Mézières and the New Order of the Passion," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Alexandria*, XVIII, (Alexandria 1964), pp.103-104.

that is represented on the two badges is quite incontrovertibly the present-day Turin Shroud, I have mostly left untranslated the French word “suaire” used for it on the souvenir pilgrim badges and medallions, likewise the Latin equivalent “sudarium” interchangeably used for it in the related original documentation. The reason is that for virtually every one of today’s English-speaking world the word “shroud” denotes a dead body’s grave wrapping, which is how Turin’s “Shroud” continues to be understood, whether purportedly (that is, as the fake that it is so widely believed to be), or as the genuine article. Altogether less clear-cut, however, is how medieval people understood the words “suaire” and “sudarium” in relation to the gospel accounts of Christ’s death and how they thought the present-day Turin cloth might have been used in various ministrations, mostly non-canonical, they supposed Christ’s body received immediately after its deposition from the cross.

For if the Charnys had intended to describe the cloth in their care definitively as a grave cloth (the cloth in which Christ’s body was wrapped for its supposed long-term internment in the tomb), they had available to them back then, just as now, the French word *linceul*. Even the great French polymath Ulysse Chevalier, a leading early twentieth-century detractor of the Shroud’s authenticity, expressed surprise that they did not use it,⁴⁶ yet they did not, and very consistently so. Which inevitably raises the question of why they did not, particularly given that Rome’s altogether more famous Veronica cloth — which was quite definitely only the size of a napkin or handkerchief

⁴⁶ Ulysse Chevalier, *Autour des Origins...* op.cit., footnote 5, p.20

and was legendarily reputed to have been applied to Christ's face whilst he was still alive -- was similarly described as a *sudarium*, thereby inevitably risking confusion.

Essentially the French *suaire*, the Latin *sudarium* and their Greek equivalent *soudarion* all have as their root the Latin *sudor* or sweat, indicative of a cloth that was intended for soaking up sweat, regardless of its exact scale, and whether it was for someone who was living or dead. Particularly noteworthy is that upon the Shroud passing into Savoy tutelage in 1453, Duke Louis I of Savoy issued a commemorative medallion bearing the inscription SANCTA SINDON D. N. IESV XPI,⁴⁷ immediately introducing a confusion of nomenclature which would thereafter become ineradicable.

Nevertheless, it remained common even several centuries later for Savoy-authorized souvenir prints of Shroud ostensions to describe it as the SANTISS[imo] SUDARIO...⁴⁸ Furthermore, the first historians to write about the Shroud following its transfer to Turin crucially made a distinction between it and its then most-notable rival, the Shroud of Besançon (a parallel "relic," which, though destroyed in the French Revolution, is known to have borne solely a front-of-the-body imprint). According to learned 17th-century antiquarians such as Jean-Jacques Chifflet, whereas Turin's Shroud was used *ante-pollincturam*, i.e. to soak up the sweat and blood from Christ's crucified

⁴⁷ This medallion is reproduced in J-J. Chifflet, *De Linteis Sepulchralibus Christi Servatoris crisis historica* (Antwerp 1624), p.120. From this and from engravings in other 17th century publications, similar medallions are known to have been commissioned by later dukes, one by Duke Charles I in 1487, the other by Emanuel Philibert in 1578. However no actual specimen seems to have survived. During the late 17th century Duke Victor Amadeus II gave the Savoy dynasty's entire collection of medals to his mistress the Countess of Verrua who sold it on to Philippe II Duke of Orleans. (See Johan Georg Keyser, *Travels through German, Hungary, Bohemia, Switzerland, Italy and Lorrain...*, London, 1758, p.252.) Following this transfer all trace of the collection became lost, the likelihood being that it was melted down during the French Revolution.

⁴⁸ See examples in Fondazione Umberto II e Maria José di Savoia *La Sindone nei Secoli nella Collezione di Umberto II'* (Turin 1998), pp.74-5; 89; 91; 103; 107. As evident from this same collection, other prints of exactly this same period refer to it as the "Santissima Sindone."

body immediately after this had been brought down from the cross, (thereby rightly labeled a *suaire* or *sudarium*), it was the Besançon Shroud which was used for the burial proper, i.e. as the body's definitive funerary wrapping for its final resting place in the tomb.⁴⁹ A 17th-century aquatint in Turin's Galleria Sabauda perfectly encapsulates this *ante pollincturam* understanding, depicting Jesus' body, fresh from crucifixion, being mourned by Mary and St. John at the foot of the cross, whilst Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus are laying it out on the large length of cloth by which it would receive its body and blood imprints, thereby becoming the "Shroud" of Turin.⁵⁰

Ultimately the blame for the nomenclature confusion derives from the gospels in which, although the three synoptic authors speak only of a *sindon* being procured for Jesus' burial cloth, the author of the John gospel never uses this word. Instead, apparently describing what he⁵¹ and his fellow disciple Peter had observed on their arrival at Jesus' tomb on the first Easter morning John first notes the use of *othonia* (general abandoned funerary wrappings), then he specially mentions a *soudarion* that was "rolled up and in a place by itself."⁵² So was he using the word *soudarion* merely as a synonym for the synoptics' *sindon*, or did he have in mind a completely different piece of cloth? Biblical translations all too often render it as "napkin" when it literally means a sweat cloth, the context making it apparent that it was surely something larger and more

⁴⁹ '*Sindon Taurinensis non in sepulchro sed ante pollincturam divino corpori adhaesit*. Chifflet, J-J, op.cit. (footnote 47), p.84

⁵⁰ See John Beldon Scott *Architecture for the Shroud*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2003), plate 4.

⁵¹ This is based on the identification of the author of the Gospel of John as being the disciple "whom Jesus loved" of John 20: 2

⁵² John 20: 7

important than the word “napkin” typically denotes. Any firm exegetical determination is likely impossible. The certainties are: first, that France’s medieval populace listened to the gospels in Latin, hence the word *sudarium*, *suaire* in their vernacular, would readily have brought to mind the “rolled up and in a place by itself” cloth, mentioned in John 20: 7; and second, that the popularity of a number of apocryphal works had generated a widespread medieval belief that the pre-funerary ministrations to Jesus’ dead body included cleansing. It would be quite wrong, therefore, to assume that, during the century when the Shroud was in Charny care, its functionality as conceived by those who labeled it as a *suaire* for the Machy and Cluny badges was necessarily the same functionality as that behind the word “shroud” as this is understood by the English-speaking world of today.

Conclusion

If the radical redating of the two badges presented here is correct, it suggests a fundamental shift is needed to current understandings of the Charny family’s tutelage of the ‘relic’ today called the Turin Shroud. Rather than the fraudulent commercialism that was alleged by local bishop Henri de Poitiers, arguably the cloth’s very first public showings at the Lirey church, as represented by the Machy badge, were simply a desperate attempt by that church’s clergy to save their foundation from insolvency and disbandment amidst France’s national chaos following its disastrous defeat at the battle of Poitiers, i.e. a well-meaning blunder that their church’s founder would likely have firmly vetoed had he been still alive. Similarly, Geoffroi II de Charny’s motives for

staging the 1389 showings, as represented by the Cluny badge, may be perceived as having been for the altogether more altruistic purpose of funding the crusading ventures to which he would devote what remained of his life. Whatever the Shroud's true origins, the Charny family, rather than their having cynically promoted an object that they knew to be a fraud, most likely very sincerely believed it to be the genuine article...🐼